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ABSTRACT

In order to gather current data about the General Educational Development (GED) program at Seminole Community College (SCC), Florida, a random sample of 1982 GED examinees were surveyed to determine the examinees' assessment of the quality of instruction, course materials, and learning laboratories at SCC; the center(s) used most often and for what length of time; the methods of advertisement that were most productive in recruiting students; the main reason for taking the GED Test; the demographic profile of the typical GED student; and the program changes that would lead to improvement. Questionnaires were mailed to 242 graduates and 132 non-graduates of SCC's program who took the GED test in 1982. Study findings, based on responses from 196 graduates and 60 non-graduates, included the following: (1) overall, the non-graduates rated the course materials and instruction lower than the graduates; (2) SCC's special GED labs were used by a small number of the respondents; (3) the best advertising appeared to be word-of-mouth, as relatives and friends were the best sources of information about the GED program; (4) the main reason for taking the GED Test was job-related for the graduates and personal satisfaction for the non-graduates; (5) over 75% of the graduates were employed either full- or part-time, as were 68% of the non-graduates; and (6) over 80% of the examinees would strongly recommend the program to others. A literature review and the questionnaire are included. (Author/LAL)

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An Evaluation of the General Educational Development Program at Seminole Community College, Sanford, Florida

Joanne Page Mize

A MAJOR APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT
PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1983

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Abstract of a Major Applied Research Project Presented to
Nova University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

AN EVALUATION OF THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM AT SEMINOLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE,
SANFORD, FLORIDA

by

Joanne Page Mize

September, 1983

Seminole Community College (SCC) was established by the 1965 Florida Legislature and in 1971 the Developmental Division was formed, offering an instructional program for adults who are non-high school graduates. The General Educational Development (GED) program provides instruction at GED study centers throughout Seminole County where students can prepare to take and pass the GED Tests to receive a Florida high school diploma.

Locally, information regarding the GED Tests examinees and programs was not routinely collected or summarized. Therefore, data that might show strengths and weaknesses was not available and the rate of growth of the program could be curtailed or slowed. On the national and state levels, there was a lack of information as to what made a successful program. Yet in 1976, the GED diploma represented 10 percent of all high school diplomas awarded annually in the United States. Statistics in 1980 showed that less than half of the adult population in the country had completed a high school education.

The GED Tests are an alternative means of establishing that a person has learning and skills equivalent to the lasting outcomes of a high school education attained through matriculation in a regular high school. The content of the GED Tests is intended to represent expected outcomes of four years of high school instruction. The GED Tests battery contains test items in five subject areas: Writing Skills, Social Studies, Science, Reading Skills, and Mathematics. The Seminole Community College program provides extensive instructional aids and administers the GED Tests monthly.

In this study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What was the examinee's assessment of the quality of instruction, course materials, and the five special GED learning laboratories?

2. What center (or centers) was used most often and for what length of time?

3. What method (or methods) of advertisement was most productive in numbers of students?

4. What was the main reason for taking the GED Tests?

5. What was the demographic profile of the typical SCC GED examinee?

6. What changes in the program would lead to improvement?

The survey method of obtaining information was used to gather data from a random sample of the 1982 GED Tests examinees. Graduates and non-graduates were asked to evaluate the program through questionnaires mailed to them.

Based on this study, the GED program at SCC holds significance for area non-high school graduates who want to improve their opportunities for educational growth, occupational growth, and self-growth. Furthermore, this study showed GED graduates to be worthy prospects for recruitment into post-high school studies.

In general, recommendations resulting from this study involve the continued support of the GED program at SCC via funding, enlargement of study centers, emphasis through the media, and recruitment of both non-high school graduates for the GED program and GED graduates for college/vocational level work.

The information obtained from this study was compiled, summarized, and distributed to administrators, counselors, and teachers. Recommendations were made for changes in the program as indicated, and personnel involved were encouraged to study and use infromation and suggestions to improve their individual areas.

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CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

Seminole Community College is located in Sanford, Florida between highway 17-92 and Interstate-4 on a 170-acre site. Easily accessible by highway to residents of the area it serves, the school is one of 28 state-supported community/junior colleges in the state. The 1965 Legislature authorized establishment of the state-supported junior college in Seminole County. The first and only president of Seminole Community College, Dr. Earl Weldon, was appointed in October, 1965 and assumed duties in January, 1966. He was assisted in the development of the college by the advisory committee composed of five prominent citizens from the county, the Seminole County School Board, and the School Superintendent and staff. The college opened in the fall of 1966 with 800 students in 17 portable buildings. The permanent building construction was conducted in phases, with phase IV being completed in 1979. In 1975, the college name was changed from Seminole Junior College to Seminole Community College by authorization of the Board of Trustees, the school governing body (Seminole Community College Catalog, 1982-83; Evening Herald, 1/18/81).

The general purpose of the college (hereafter referred to as SCC), is stated in the college catalog, "As a community-oriented institution, the college provides opportunities for general and

specialized education to members of the community in an environment conducive to learning" (p. 10). One of the seven specific purposes of the college is stated: "To provide programs for basic and adult education which can lead to a high school diploma or its equivalent" (SCC Catalog, 1982-83, p. 10).

The college catalog states that:

> Adult education, or lifelong learning, is emerging as a positive and vital force in American life. Seminole Community College recognizes the need to provide educational services to all its citizens. Adult education activities are available at SCC and many off-campus locations at time periods most convenient to adult participants. The Adult and Continuing Education Division includes the Developmental Division. Under the Developmental Division is included the General Educational Development program (hereafter referred to as the GED program). (SCC Catalog, 1982-83, pp. 184-88)

The primary purpose of the GED program is to enable adults to earn a Florida high school diploma. Programs of study are offered to aid adults to complete the GED Tests. The program is designed for persons 18 years and older who are not enrolled in a regular day school. In justifiable cases, persons at least 16 years old and not enrolled in a regular day school may be admitted by submitting a statement of justification (SCC Catalog, 1982-83).

Adults must meet the following state requirements to qualify to take the GED:

1. Provide documentation that the candidate is a resident of the State of Florida;

2. Provide documentation that the candidate is of legal age to qualify;

3. Complete all documentation at least 10 days in advance of the monthly testing sessions (SCC Catalog, 1982-83).

The requirements for the GED diploma require that the candidate must attain a minimum of 40 or above on each of the five subtests and an overall score of 225. The five subtests are: (1) Writing Skills, (2) Social Studies, (3) Science, (4) Reading Skills, and (5) Mathematics. The study program is free to eligible adults with a fee charged for the administration of the GED Tests, which are given monthly on the local adult and continuing education campus (SCC Catalog, 1982-83).

Seminole Community College is one of nine community/junior colleges in Florida offering a General Educational Development instructional program. The Developmental Division, where the program is administered, originated in 1971. Although Seminole County, the location of SCC, is the fifth smallest county in area in Florida, it is one of the fastest growing counties in population. According to Mitchell (1983), Chairperson, Developmental Division, there are 35 GED instructional centers in the county. Six of the centers are full-time, with one on the college campus, and 29 centers are located throughout the county in schools, churches, businesses, and spaces rented by the college. The GED staff has grown to include, besides the chairperson, five full-time instructors, 32 part-time instructors, three paraprofessionals, and a support staff of one full-time employee and two part-time employees.

According to the course objectives for GED preparation, "the purpose is for students to prepare and pass the GED Tests by receiving instruction in the subject areas concerned. This course

is not designed for earning high school credit" (Mitchell, 1983). The course description furnished by SCC states:

> For the student to attain a level of educational accomplishment which meets his goal of successfully completing the GED Tests and obtaining a state high school diploma. This course is designed to meet the needs of students who may function at the secondary level in some areas while functioning at the elementary level in others. (Mitchell, 1983)

In 1982, 33,007 GED diplomas were awarded in Florida representing over 20 percent of all diplomas awarded in the state (State Advisory Council on Adult and Community Education, 1983). During 1982, 841 persons took at least one or more of the five GED subtests at SCC. There were 645 GED graduates at SCC during this period of time (Willimas, 1983). Ayers (1980) contends the success of the program is measured to a large extent by the number of graduates. Seventy-seven percent of the 1982 SCC examinees graduated. This figure exceeded the state passage rate of 73 percent (Florida State of Department of Education, 1983).

Statement of the Problem

Information regarding local GED Tests examinees and programs was not routinely collected or summarized; therefore, information that might show local strengths and weaknesses was not available and the rate of growth of the local programs could be curtailed or slowed as a result. Information concerning the GED and the Developmental Division could prove important if it becomes necessary for the college to justify the need for the existence of the program to the Florida Legislature. In 1983 some of the legislators

expressed an interest in taking the GED programs away from the nine community colleges that have them, and turning the programs over to the public school systems in the respective counties. This study evaluated the GED study program at Seminole Community College.

The GED testing program, begun in 1942, is administered by the American Council on Education (ACE). ACE, founded in 1918, is composed of institutions of higher education and national and regional education associations, and is a coordinating body for post-secondary education. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., ACE provides comprehensive leadership for improving education standards, policies, procedures, and services. Presently, through the GED Testing Service, the tests are administered in all 50 states, many Canadian provinces, and in the U.S. commonwealths and territories (Patience and Whitney, 1982).

In 1980 the GED Testing Service conducted a national survey to collect, analyze, and interpret data from a nationally representative sample of adults taking the GED Tests because data are not routinely collected. The only national picture of examinee characteristics and test performance previously available came through the few aggregate statistics reported on by Malizio and Whitney (1981). Patience (1983) of the GED Testing Service and Bishop (1982) of Adult Education, State of Florida Education Department, indicated there was a lack of information available about what makes a successful program. There are many published instructional materials intended for use in GED preparation programs, but evaluation of these materials was lacking.

Despite the rapid growth in school enrollments and educational opportunities in the United States, less than half of the adult population has completed a high school education (The University of State of New York, 1981). Malizio and Whitney (1981) report that nearly 25 million women and 22 million men in the United States aged 16 years and over are not enrolled in, and have not graduated from, high school.

Presently in Florida there are adult education programs in all 67 counties. Nine of these programs are administered by community/junior colleges (including SCC), and the remainder by district school boards. The growth of the GED program in Florida has been substantial. For the year ending December 31, 1967, 5,788 persons tested in Florida and 4,367 diplomas were issued (Adult and Community Education, 1981). In the year ending December 31, 1982, there were 54,000 GED Tests administered in Florida to over 44,000 individuals and approximately 33,000 diplomas were issued (Florida State Department of Education, 1983). Florida is one of the states with the largest number of examinees tested (Malizio and Whitney, 1981).

Seminole Community College GED Test Center was thirteenth in testing volume in the state out of 105 centers in 1982. Locally, the number of tests given, including retests, was 1,075. The number of currently enrolled high school students testing at SCC was 45. Diplomas were issued to 41 students for a passage rate of 91 percent; the state passage rate for currently enrolled high school students was 74 percent (Florida State Department of Education, 1983).

In order to gather current data about the GED program at SCC the survey method of gathering information was used, polling a random sample of 1982 GED Tests examinees. Graduates and non-graduates were asked to evaluate the program.

Background and Significance

Americans have participated actively in what is becoming a major world movement to promote lifelong learning. In the process a good deal has been learned concerning the relationship of adult education to national development and social reform, and perhaps international understanding, too (Harrington, 1977).

Bloom (1963) states,

> Some societies need only a small number of highly educated persons in the economy and can provide the economic support for only a small proportion of the students to complete secondary or higher education. The complexities of the skills required by the economy in the United States and in other highly developed nations mean that we can no longer operate on the assumption that completion of secondary and advanced education is for the few. Whatever might have been the case previously, highly developed nations must seek to find ways to increase the proportions of the age group that can successfully complete both secondary and higher education. (p. 2)

This thought reflects the thinking by many, and the community college movement is generally responding to this view.

Ayers (1980) contended this nation's rapid growth and rise in the standard of living have been brought about in part through development and implementation of technology. A technological society cannot operate advanced levels of technology without a high rate of literacy. This nation cannot advance indefinitely

if a large segment of the working population lacks basic educational skills necessary for economic and civic growth.

Employment figures show that high school dropouts are unemployed almost twice as often as graduates, and the outlook worsens each year (Borden, 1976). Undereducated adults present a major obstacle to individual and business growth in an area. Undereducated persons cannot take advantage of college credit courses and certain vocational courses that require a high school diploma or its equivalent (Ayers, 1980). As a substantial number of young adults drop out before high school graduation, employment opportunities in industry, government, and the armed services place increased emphasis on the high school credential (The University of State of New York, 1981).

Knowles (1978) expressed the idea that the adult comes into an educational activity largely because he is experiencing some inadequacy in coping with current life problems. Abraham Maslow (1970), the social psychologist, saw the goal of learning as self-actualization--the fullest use of talents, capacities, and potentialities. Educators, according to Shertzer (1981), say that the purpose of education is to change a person's thinking, skills, attitudes, and values. Education can be a process of developing and stretching the individual's capacity.

The purpose of adult education in Florida is to expand the educational opportunities for all adults and to provide educational opportunities that would:

1. Enable all adults to acquire basic skills necessary to function in society:

2. Enable adults to continue their education to at least the level of completion of secondary school;

3. Make available training that will enable adults to become more employable, productive, and responsible citizens (Adult and Community Education, 1982).

The complex society we live in makes it increasingly difficult for people to realize advancement if they lack educational background. That is one of the reasons the number of people taking the GED exam increases every year. As the number tested increases, the percentage of those who meet the requirements for a GED diploma is decreasing on a national level. There is no evidence as to why the number passing has decreased. Speculation is that persons may take the tests without being adequately prepared. Public relations and advertisement make it appear that the GED program is an easy way to obtain an equivalency diploma. Also, the population taking the tests has changed. Prior to the 1960s examinees were primarily high school dropouts who had acquired basic academic skills. Since then there have been large numbers of minority disadvantaged persons taking the test who have no prior formal high school experience (The University of State of New York, 1981).

The GED is an alternative means of establishing that a person has learning and skills equivalent to the lasting outcomes of a high school education attained through regular metriculation. GED Tests measure ability to use information rather than remember details (Malizio and Whitney, 1982). Examinees are tested on their

retention of broad concepts and generalizations, rather than on how well they can remember facts and details or precise definitions (Cervero and Peterson, 1982). In 1976 the GED diploma represented 10 percent of all the high school diplomas awarded annually in the United States (Miller, 1976). The high school diploma, or its equivalent, is one of the most valuable indicators of potential success (The University of State of New York, 1981). In this age of specialization, the number of people showing interest in the GED Tests is expected to increase.

The basic rationale for the GED Tests was developed by E.G. Lindquist in the 1940s when he sought to develop a testing program after World War II. The criteria were:

1. The tests were to be entirely objective; virtually self-administering in character.
2. The tests were to be short as possible.
3. The tests were to be simple in organization.
4. The tests were to correspond to the high school curriculum.
5. The tests were to be broadly comprehensive in nature.
6. The tests would not penalize the individual for lack of recent academic or classroom experience (Miller, 1976).

The GED Tests series emphasize reading comprehension as the most critical set of skills necessary to pass the exam. Comprehension skills are essential not only for Social Studies, Science, and Reading Skills tests, but also for correct interpretation of instructions and questions in the Writing Skills and Mathematics tests. Most of the Social Studies and Reading Skills passages

represent a 6.0 to 8.0 grade readability level. The reading levels of the Science passages range from 6.0 to 14.0+ grade readability level with a heavy concentration at an 11.0 grade level (Swarm, 1981). The content of the GED Tests is intended to represent a sample of the expected outcomes of four years of high school instruction.

The GED Tests battery contains 290 objective test items in the five subject areas tests: Writing Skills (80 items), Social Studies (60 items), Science (60 items), Reading Skills (40 items), and Mathematics (50 items). The tests contain questions requiring use of concepts, general knowledge, and thinking skills. There are few questions about isolated details, definitions or specific facts. The GED Tests measure, among other things, the ability to use information rather than remember details. For each test item, examinees are asked to select the best answer from among five alternatives. The items cover a wide range of subjects and vary in difficulty from easy to difficult (Malizio and Whitney, 1981). The tests are timed individually and a total of six hours and 45 minutes is allowed to complete all sections (State Advisory Council on Adult and Community Education, 1983).

All answers for the tests are marked on a separate answer sheet by blackening appropriate spaces. Only correct answers are counted and there is no penalty for incorrect answers. Therefore, examinees are urged to answer each question.

The standard scores are used to report each examinee's GED results for each of the tests in the battery. The standard scores

for each test are normalized scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. The relationship between raw scores and standard scores is based on the test results of a nationwide representative sample of grade twelve students tested near graduation in 1980. The American Council on Education has recommended graduation requirements be neither so high as to represent levels of achievement far above that demonstrated by recent graduates, nor so low as to jeopardize the credibility of the GED programs (Swarm, 1981). The University of State of New York (1981) asserts that;

> Every attempt to measure and categorize the human endeavor has limitations. The situation becomes more complex when measurement is used in the credentialing of the individual. Credentials are used to predict future performance. Yet, award of the credential is based on performance at a given point in time. Uncontrollable variables affect every performance, so untainted measurement data becomes impossible. (p. 6)

At SCC there are 35 GED study centers; six are full-time and 29 are part-time. When students register at a center, they are given an entry survey for placement purposes. The survey, which was developed locally, attempts to measure the level of competency a student has in: (1) language (writing skills), (2) mathematics, and (3) reading. The survey has a total of 56 multiple choice questions and is untimed. When the survey is scored by an instructor, the student is given a student schedule sheet with specific assignments for Contemporary Books GED study guides. The student is told to work in materials recommended on the basis of the survey, but the assignment will be changed if the student finds the work too difficult or too easy.

At the college campus center, students who need specific help in reading, writing skills, and/or mathematics may use special laboratory classes with instructors trained in each area. Otherwise, students work in the GED center on their own without a formal teaching situation. The instructor is available to answer questions, give instruction, and offer suggestions. In addition, faculty members have produced numerous handout materials covering all areas of the Writing Skills and Mathematics Tests, and some for the three reading areas. Students are encouraged to use these study aids and return them unmarked before taking the GED Tests.

The GED Tests are given monthly at designated times in the campus center. Recommendation to test, or not to test, is made based on the outcome of the Official GED Pretest (American Council on Education, 1980). This test is administered in the center where the student has studied and is given when the center instructor and the examinee believe the individual is ready for GED testing. The student who does not meet the required pretest scores for test recommendation may test on demand, although this is discouraged. One week before the tests the examinee must register and pay the test fee--the only fee charged in the entire program. This same week an orientation is conducted where a faculty member gives tips on how to take a test. This seminar is designed to aid the examinee who has been away from the educational process for a period of time and the examinee who may suffer from test anxiety.

The tests are scored at the State Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida. In the United States, the American Council

on Education's acceptable passing score (minimum score of 40 or average score of 45) is set at a level so that about 73 percent of the high school graduates in the norming group would qualify for a GED diploma. No other state in the nation has a higher passing score than Florida. Florida's minimum passing score is a score of 40 on each of the five GED Tests and an average score of 45 on each test for a minimum total score of 225 on all five tests. The scoring system is set so that only about 67 percent of the high school graduates in the norming group would have met the requirement for the State of Florida High School Diploma (State Advisory Council on Adult and Community Education, 1983).

The results of the tests are returned to the test administrator on the SCC campus, and immediately mailed to the examinees. After successfully completing and passing all sections of the GED Tests with a total score of 225, the student is eligible for a Florida high school diploma. The diploma may be received immediately, or the student may elect to officially receive the diploma at one of the three graduation ceremonies held yearly for GED graduates.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What was the examinee's assessment of the quality of instruction, course materials, and the five special GED learning laboratories?

2. What center (or centers) was used most often and for what length of time?

3. What method (or methods) of advertisement was most productive in numbers of students?

4. What was the main reason for taking the GED Tests?

5. What was the demographic profile of the typical SCC GED examinee?

6. What changes in the program would lead to improvement?

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions clarify terms used in this study:

1. Seminole Community College (SCC): state-supported community college located in Sanford, Seminole County, Florida.

2. General Educational Development (GED) Tests: A battery of five comprehensive examinations in the areas of English composition, social studies, natural science, literature, and mathematics.

3. General Educational Development (GED) Centers: Locations in the county where a program of instructional strategies designed to accommodate individual differences is taught.

4. General Educational Development (GED) Graduate: An individual who has achieved at least the minimum required scores on the GED Tests and has received a high school equivalency diploma, or certificate as it may be called.

5. General Educational Development (GED) Instructor: A professionally trained teacher who tests, places, and assists adult students in the GED program as their individual needs require.

6. Special GED Laboratories on SCC Campus: Laboratory classes in math, English, reading, and speech offering individualized instruction in specific areas and taught by instructors trained in each area. Also, there is the Plato Learning Laboratory where computer-based instructional preparation is offered in math and English.

Limitations of the Study

The following were limitations of the Seminole Community College study:

1. The survey would be answered only by those who respond and were accessible.

2. Surveys are vulnerable to underraters and overraters--people who tend to give consistently low and high ratings.

3. Survey participants may falsify replies in order to enhance their self-image.

4. Questions on the survey might not have been understood.

5. There was no assurance that the addressee would be the one, or only one, who would answer.

6. It was possible that only those persons who considered themselves successful would answer.

Assumptions about the Study

The following assumptions were made about this study:

1. The random sample was limited to one academic year, 1982, and it was assumed that the students of this year, randomly selected, were representative of previous years.

2. It was assumed that a high rate of surveys would be obtained from a recent academic year.

CHAPTER TWO
Related Literature

A review of the literature showed there were relevant studies that dealt with GED examinees and graduates. There appeared to be substantial interest in comparing success in post-high school education of non-high school graduates and traditional high school graduates. In 1972, Roon examined student records at Metropolitan State College in Denver for a seven-year period. The study showed that regular high school graduates in the top 30 percent of their class maintained the highest grade point average with GED graduates having the lowest overall grade point average. However, Roon found, when all students with grade point averages below 2.00 were eliminated, a comparison of the remaining grade point averages revealed no significant difference between regular high school graduates and GED graduates. Hannah (1972) studied three representative Alabama junior colleges. No significant difference in GPAs was found at the end of the first year of attendance and at the end of the second year, the GED GPA was higher. Thus it appears that GED students in college can be as successful (sometimes more) as regular high school graduates.

Byrd and others (1973) compared educational success of GED graduates with traditional high school graduates at Wilkes Community College, North Carolina. The study was designed to reveal differences in reading placement scores or in grade point averages in

freshman English or mathematics. Thirty adult GED graduates and 50 randomly selected high school graduates enrolled at Wilkes Community College were selected for the study. The conclusions revealed no significant difference in the two areas tested. Ayers' (1975) study at Surry Community College in North Carolina was comprised of 49 GED graduates and a similar number of randomly selected high school graduates of the 1973-74 academic year. This study compared the academic success of the two groups. The conclusion was that no significant differences existed in the grade point averages of the two groups. Fischer (1977) compared high school seniors and non-high school senior candidates' performance on the GED Tests. The high school students came from an eight-state area and the GED candidates from a five-state area. Generally, the GED students did not perform as well as the seniors overall.

Locally, at SCC, Reid (1982) compared first-term academic performance of SCC Adult High School graduates and GED graduates. The findings revealed, "It appears the AHS graduates are performing better academically than the GED graduates and withdraw from fewer classes, which was a significant factor between the two groups." Sharon (1972) completed a study that saw disadvantages in using the GPA as a measure of success for the GED graduate. He believed it was not a stable indicator as it changed from term to term and it measured only academic achievement. On the positive side, Sharon found the effects of the GED on the non-traditional student surveyed were far-reaching. For many it meant access to formal higher education. To others it meant obtaining a job, possibility

of higher income, and feelings of self-confidence and accomplishment.

The quality of American education is presently under intense scrutiny. There is major concern that persons are not being adequately prepared for further education or for life in general. The jury is still out as to whether people with high school equivalency credentials can compete successfully with graduates of traditional high schools in post-high school programs (Wilson, et al, 1981). For example, Moore's (1973) study in Texas concluded GED graduates are five times more likely to drop out of junior colleges than regular high school graduates. On the other hand, Hannah (1972) found evidence, in three representative Alabama junior colleges, that the high school graduate dropout rate was higher the first year with no significant difference in the second year dropout rate.

Three recent studies appear to be supportive of the value of the GED diploma for further educational pursuits. Wolf (1980) studied the significance of the predictive value of both mean GED standard scores and GED subtests standard scores as to academic performance at South Plains College, Texas from 1970-73. The major focus of the study was on non-traditional high school graduates who had completed the GED. No significant difference in the mean first semester two-year college GPAs was found for GED graduates, high school graduates, and non-high school graduates without GEDs. It was concluded the GED has some value as a predictor of first semester, two-year college GPA at this college.

In addition, the study suggested taking into consideration the student's age and number of high school grades completed when predicting academic performance. Ayers (1980) studied the educational and employment growth of the GED graduates at Surry Community College, North Carolina. Educationally, the GED graduate enrolled in college earned a GPA comparable to the high school graduate enrolled at Surry. Wilson (1981) and others studied the success of GED graduates and traditional high school graduates in vocational programs at Lake City Community College, Florida. This study compared students entering postsecondary vocational education with a high school diploma to that of students who had not completed a high school program but had a GED diploma. The two groups were separately compared by community college grade point average, program completion, and employment placement. All three comparisons found no significant difference between the groups. It was concluded that students with GED diplomas succeed as well as high school diploma holders in postsecondary education programs. The study also urged GED preparation programs not presently related to postsecondary vocational institutions to seek such a relationship.

Malizio and Peterson (1982) addressed the performance of GED graduates and graduating seniors sampled in a 1980 nationwide norming survey. Detailed analysis indicated GED graduates, as a group, outperformed graduating seniors in 18 of the 22 content areas contained in the GED battery. It is pointed out that the GED examinee was aware of minimum passing scores in effect in

most states whereas the high school senior participating in the norming was not. It is possible that this information, coupled with the use of predictive pretests, could have had a positive effect on the GED examinees being reasonably confident they could pass the tests before applying to take them.

Motivation for taking the GED Tests, besides educational factors already dealt with, falls into two other major categories: job-related and personal satisfaction. Undereducated persons, besides missing out on educational opportunities, are often not eligible for job consideration or promotion because employers require a high school credential for employees. "This program [GED at SCC] was designed for adults who have been out of school for a while but need a diploma for a job" (Ferpes, 1982, p. 26). Ayers (1980) reported that a substantial number of respondents found the GED diploma helpful in gaining employment, job promotions, and salary increases. Sharon's (1972) study found that for many the GED diploma meant obtaining a job, possibility of higher income and feelings of self-confidence and accomplishment. Cervero and Peterson (1982) studied the "after-effects" of the "second chance" GED program. A nationally representative sample of 12,646 GED candidates were surveyed on educational and employment outcomes. Ninety-five percent of the respondents found the GED experience positive. Fifty-two percent found the GED credential helpful in obtaining a new job and 20 percent found it helpful in improving present job situations.

The attainment of education can help build self-esteem. Not having a high school diploma is an embarrassment for some people. Attending the GED program can be instrumental in building a positive self-image, and enhancing one's ability to pursue leisure time activities. For the older GED student who is a parent, getting a GED diploma can help reinforce the schooling of that parent's child, or children (The University of State of New York, 1981). Many people are hampered by the lack of a high school credential in terms of fulfilling multiple roles in their adult lives (Mize, 1982). London and Ewing contend,

> Adult education plays an important role in providing information people need in order to cope with changing social conditions. For the individual, limited education becomes a barrier to securing satisfactory employment. (pp. 24, 39)

Most individuals want to make their own living and way in this world, but also want to work at something that gives meaning to their lives. Shertzer (1977) believes adult learners can benefit from learning which will carry over into effective decision-making and achievement satisfaction in the home and community, as well as school. Worley and Einbecker (1974) found that undereducated adults need educational programs that help them function better in society, not only in occupational areas, but also in developing a higher self-concept and better understanding of the world around them. These authors see the strength of the community college as the ability to provide education that is responsive to local needs.

The GED program benefits not only the individual who receives the GED diploma, but also society which has a more content and productive citizen. Mally and Charuhas (1977) found that not only did individuals who passed the GED endorse the program, but local employers appeared to accept the GED diploma as a substitute for a high school diploma. A Memphis City School System study (1969) formulated a list of individual and society benefits for the GED. This list, which is still relevant, states:

> The benefits for the individual include:
> 1. Released skills and initiative.
> 2. Self-confidence and self-respect.
> 3. Recognition and identity.
> 4. Sense of achievement and growth.
> 5. Sense of belonging.
> 6. Security and a comfortable living.
>
> The benefits for society include:
> 1. Informed and thinking citizens prepared to meet the practical needs of a changing society.
> 2. More effective citizens who are more aware of their rights and responsibilities.
> 3. Citizens who are capable of making a greater contribution to family, community, and country. (pp. 33,34)

Rand (1976) points out that the intent of the GED program is to have sufficient flexibility so that the learner can attain the end results in the least time with the most efficiency. Since 1971, the GED Testing program has enabled nearly 4.5 million adults to obtain formal recognition of their educational development by receiving a high school equivalency credential. These credentials continue to be accepted by more than 90 percent of the colleges and universities, many employers, and sometimes by the armed services (1982 GED Statistical Report). All in all, the GED "second chance" program is an extraordinary opportunity for

those who did not finish high school during what society considers the "normal" timetable.

CHAPTER THREE
Methodology

The general research methodology used in this study was the case study where surveys were used to determine how and with what degree of effectiveness the GED study program functioned. On the basis of these data, implications for the improvement of GED educational practices were considered.

Survey questionnaires were developed after the research questions were processed. A determination was made as to what needed to be known about the GED program at SCC and what was going to be done with the information after it was gathered. Sudman and Bradburn (1982) suggested in Asking Questions that a search be conducted to find questions on the subject by other researchers. Ideas were taken from a questionnaire to evaluate a GED program developed by Ayers (1980) who gave permission to replicate (9/15/82). The Student-Outcomes Questionnaire: An Implementation Handbook (1979) and Questionnaires: Design and Use (1974) offered insight into surveying.

The development of the survey instruments was accomplished by presenting sample questions to 10 GED instructors and 10 GED students and asking them to react to these questions and suggest questions themselves to be used to evaluate the GED study program. The suggestions were used to develop two sample questionnaires--one for the graduates and one for the non-graduates.

After these sample questionnaires were developed, they were then presented to five GED instructors to critique and rate each question on a scale of from one (lowest) to five (highest). The instructors were asked to critique on the basis of: (1) clarity of the question to obtain information, (2) relevance to the topic of the Major Applied Research Project, and (3) importance of the information to the GED program and SCC. Any question rated three or under by three of the five evaluators was discarded. Any question rated three by at least one of the evaluators was examined for possible revision or exclusion. The revised questionnaires contained the suggestions received, and this established the validity of the instruments.

The revised questionnaires were presented to 10 GED students who answered the questions. Two days later the same questionnaires were presented to the same students who answered the questions again. The two surveys were compared to determine any differences in item responses. No differences existed, the survey answers were identical on both days. Thus, the reliability of the questionnaires was established by this test-retest method. The GED Graduate Survey (Appendix A) and the GED Survey Form (Appendix B) for the non-graduates were now in form for distribution. A letter of explanation was written for both graduates and non-graduates (Appendices C and D, respectively).

The graduate and non-graduate surveys were identical except for two questions on each. On the graduate survey the participant was asked: (1) about post-high school education and (2) college

grade point average (if they had one). The non-graduate was asked: (1) if the participant was continuing to study for the GED Tests and (2) reasons for leaving the program without a diploma (if one did). Graduates' and non-graduates' replies were compared regarding each research question.

The survey questionnaires to be mailed to each GED Tests examinee attempted to determine to what degree the GED program at SCC is effective in meeting the primary purpose of the program which is to enable adults to earn a Florida high school diploma. Questions were asked to elicit information for the purpose of improving educational practices in the SCC GED program. The information obtained was used to answer the research questions raised in this study.

Mailed survey questionnaires were used to survey a random sample of the 645 graduates and 196 non-graduates who tested in 1982 at SCC. The lists of names and addresses for the graduates and non-graduates were obtained from the test administrator. The name and address of each graduate was cut out and put in a paper bag. The same procedure was followed for the non-graduates, with the names and addresses put in a separate bag. After all the names and addresses had been cut out and put in the bags, the bags were shaken to mix up the pieces of paper. Using the random sample table in Isaac and Michael (1980), 242 graduate names were drawn out and pasted on long sheets of paper. The same procedure was followed for the non-graduates with 132 names being drawn out and pasted on long sheets of paper. These names were coded with a number.

When the mailing began, the envelopes and questionnaires were coded with the same number. For example, John Doe had the number 100 put beside his name on the list. The envelope addressed to him had the number 100, and so did the stamped enclosed return envelope. Without opening the return envelope, a determination could be made as to whose survey was being returned completed or returned because it could not be delivered. Coding made for efficient bookkeeping of what was happening; up-to-the-minute figures were available on the two groups answering. Numbering of the graduate surveys began with 100, and the non-graduate surveys began with 500 so the two groups would not be confused. A 70 percent return from each group was desirable for valid results.

After two weeks the 70 percent response rate had been reached for the graduates, but not for the non-graduates. A second mailing was made to 60 non-respondents of the original non-graduate mailing whose letters had not been returned as undeliverable. Copies of the original letter (Appendix D) were used with a handwritten message at the bottom requesting help. Survey forms and a stamped addressed return enveloped were included. After two weeks this mailing produced only five responses. At that time, the results were tabulated on the 196 graduate surveys and the 60 non-graduate surveys which were completed and returned.

The results of this study are summarized in the results chapter, using specific tables to answer the research questions and compare data. Additional data are presented in the appendices. Percentages to be reported in all tables and appendices are based

on the actual number of persons responding to the surveys, except where otherwise noted.

Several of the questions posed in this study were dealt with in the 1980 national survey of GED examinees as reported by Malizio and Whitney (1981) in Who Takes The GED Tests? and in a state survey reported by the Florida State Department of Education in 1983. McClure (1983) conducted a survey of selected SCC GED outreach centers regarding publicity. A comparison of the results of this study with the above mentioned studies was made whenever possible.

CHAPTER FOUR
Results

The results of this study were derived from the responses of 196 graduates to the graduate survey (Appendix A) and 60 non-graduates to the non-graduate survey (Appendix B). Survey forms were mailed to 242 graduates and 132 non-graduates. Six of the graduate surveys were returned undeliverable and 13 of the non-graduate surveys were returned undeliverable. The 196 graduate surveys that were completed and returned comprised 83 percent of deliverable surveys. The 60 non-graduate surveys that were completed and returned comprised 50 percent of deliverable surveys of this group.

The undeliverable letters appeared to be from the same geographic locations as the deliverable letters; otherwise, no information was available about the non-respondents. However, the high number of survey responses was considered sufficient for this study.

This study addressed the following six research questions:

1. What was the examinee's assessment of the quality of instruction, course materials, and five special GED learning laboratories?

2. What center (or centers) was used most often and for what length of time?

3. What method (or methods) of advertisement was most productive in numbers of students?

4. What was the main reason for taking the GED Tests?

5. What was the demographic profile of the typical SCC GED examinee?

6. What changes in the program would lead to improvements?

This chapter of the study presents the information gathered through the surveys. The two surveys with the aggregate answers appear in Appendices E and F. Here tables are presented with information based on the responses. Comparisons have been made where local, state and national data were available. The data from both graduate and non-graduate surveys are presented together, distinctions noted, and the two questions on each that are different are reported accordingly.

In question A, determining the quality of the course materials and instruction in the five test areas, the respondents were asked to rate each of the educational services as excellent, good, average or poor. There was also a "did not use" category. The four rating categories were assigned a numerical rating: excellent (4), good (3), average (2), and poor (1). The number of responses in each category was multiplied by the category rating number, then all ratings were totaled and divided by the total number of persons rating the particular area, thus providing the mean scores (Table 1). The ratings of the five areas of course materials, as determined by the graduates, were: (a) Writing Skills--3.14, (B) Social Studies--2.15, (C) Science--2.30, (D) Reading--3.30, and (E) Mathematics--3.47.

Table 1
Responses of Graduates to Survey Question A

A. How do you feel about each of the educational services provided through the GED program at SCC?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Total Number Rating	$\bar{X}$
Course Materials in:						
A. Writing Skills	31	115	6	1	153	3.14
B. Social Studies	6	37	82	26	151	2.15
C. Science	8	47	93	14	162	2.30
D. Reading	62	96	4	4	166	3.30
E. Mathematics	91	72	7	2	172	3.47
Instruction in:						
A. Writing Skills	22	62	45	5	134	2.15
B. Social Studies	16	121	16	3	156	2.96
C. Science	21	108	21	6	156	2.91
D. Reading	41	53	28	3	125	3.28
E. Mathematics	52	71	32	1	156	3.12

The ratings for the instruction in the same five areas were similarly computed. The instruction received mean score ratings as follows: (A) Writing Skills--2.15, (B) Social Studies--2.96, (C) Science--2.91, (D) Reading--3.28, and (E) Mathematics--3.12. The responses of the non-graduates were tabulated in the same manner as the graduate responses (Table 2). The five areas of course materials received mean score ratings as follows: (A) Writing Skills--3.49, (B) Social Studies--2.50, (C) Science--2.73, (D) Reading--3.05, and (E) Mathematics--2.91. The instruction was rated as follows: (A) Writing Skills--2.74, (B) Social Studies--2.49, (C) Science--2.69, (D) Reading--2.89, and (E) Mathematics--2.90.

Question B asked the respondents to rate the five special laboratories on the SCC campus only. The rating procedure followed was exactly as the above procedure described. The total number of respondents using the labs were low. The graduates rated the five labs as follows: (1) Math Lab--3.81, (2) English Lab--2.81, (3) Reading Lab--3.18, (4) Speech Lab--3.00, and (5) Plato Computer Learning Lab--3.84 (Table 3). The non-graduates rated the five labs as follows: (1) Math Lab--3.66, (2) English Lab--3.50, (3) Reading Lab--3.10, (4) Speech Lab--3.00, and (5) Plato Computer Learning Lab--3.50 (Table 4).

Question C referred to recommending the GED program at SCC to others. An overwhelming 86.2 percent of the graduates and 81.7 percent of the non-graduates responded that they would recommend the GED program. One percent of the graduates and 1.67

Table 2
Responses of Non-graduates to Survey Question A

A. How do you feel about each of the educational services provided through the GED program at SCC?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Total Number Rating	$\bar{X}$
Course Materials in:						
A. Writing Skills	16	25	5	1	47	3.49
B. Social Studies	4	27	6	11	48	2.50
C. Science	6	31	5	7	49	2.73
D. Reading	8	25	4	1	38	3.05
E. Mathematics	5	33	7	1	46	2.91
Instruction in:						
A. Writing Skills	16	10	15	6	47	2.74
B. Social Studies	7	22	19	5	55	2.49
C. Science	11	13	17	4	45	2.69
D. Reading	15	14	14	3	46	2.89
E. Mathematics	18	15	12	5	50	2.90

Table 3
Responses of Graduates to Survey Question B

B. There are five special labs, located on the Seminole Community College campus only. If you used one or more of the labs, please rate those you used.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Total Number Rating	$\bar{X}$
1. Math Lab	19		2		21	3.81
2. English Lab	2	5	4		11	2.81
3. Reading Lab	3	14			17	3.18
4. Speech Lab		2			2	3.00
5. Plato Computer Learning Lab	11	2			13	3.84

Table 4
Responses of Non-graduates to Survey Question B

B. There are five special labs, located on the Seminole Community College campus only. If you used one or more of the labs, please rate those you used.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Total Number Rating	$\bar{X}$
1. Math Lab	4	2			6	3.66
2. English Lab	5	2	1		8	3.50
3. Reading Lab	2	7	1		10	3.10
4. Speech Lab	1		1		2	3.00
5. Plato Computer Learning Lab	3		1		4	3.50

percent of the non-graduates would not recommend the GED program. Twelve percent of the graduates and 16.7 percent of the non-graduates did not respond to the question (Table 5).

Question D dealt with the number of weeks spent at a study center preparing to take the GED Tests. Of the graduates 63.3 percent studied at a center between one and 10 weeks in preparation for the tests, while 51.6 percent of the non-graduates studied this amount of time (Table 6).

Question E asked which center or centers the graduates and non-graduates used for study preparation. The largest number of graduate responses came from the centers with the largest enrollment--Campus Center (day and night), Florida Federal (day and night) and Casselberry Methodist Church (night center). The non-graduate responses were predominately from the Campus Center (day and night)--60 percent indicating this was their study center. Of the graduates, 11.2 percent tested on demand or did not use a center and 17.3 percent did not answer the question. The non-graduates, other than those who studied on campus, came from various centers, with 8.3 percent indicating no center or testing on demand, and 18.3 did not answer the question (Table 7).

The graduates' and non-graduates' computation and understanding of mathematics concepts and ideas was the subject of question F. Respondents were asked to check as many answers as applicable. Among the graduates 80.6 percent knew how to solve general math problems, 36.7 percent could solve algebra problems, 15.3 percent could solve geometry problems, and 63.3 percent

Table 5
Responses to Survey Question C

C. Would you recommend the GED program at SCC to others?

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
YES	169	86.2	49	81.7
NO	2	1.0	1	1.7
No response	25	12.8	10	16.7
Total	196	100.0	60	100.1

Table 6
Responses to Survey Question D

D. How many weeks did you spend at an SCC study center or through the SCC correspondence course preparing to take the GED Tests?

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Total Weeks				
None	15	7.7	3	5.0
1-5	69	35.2	20	33.3
6-10	55	28.1	11	18.3
11-15	14	7.1	4	6.7
16-20	9	4.6	5	8.3
21-25	5	2.6	0	0.0
26-30	4	2.0	0	0.0
Over 30 weeks	2	1.0	6	10.0
other*	23	11.7	17	28.3
Total	196	100.0	60	100.0

*No record, unknown, no answer

Table 7
Responses to Survey Question E

E. At what center or centers did you prepare to take the GED Tests? If a correspondence student, please indicate.

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Campus (morning and night)	56	28.6	36	60.0
Seminole Library	12	6.1	--	--
Sanford Middle	8	4.1	2	3.3
Florida Federal	31	15.8	2	3.3
Rush Hampton	2	1.0	1	1.7
Castle Brewer	1	0.5	--	--
Executive Point	1	0.5	--	--
Casselberry Methodist	22	11.2	--	--
Altamonte Civic	2	1.0	--	--
Florida Power & Light	1	0.5	--	--
Oviedo	2	1.0	1	1.7
Phoenix	1	0.5	--	--
Stromberg/Carlson	--	--	1	1.7
NCR	--	--	1	1.7
correspondence	1	0.5	--	--
No center/ Test on demand	22	11.2	5	8.3
No answer	34	17.3	11	18.3
Total	196	99.8	60	100.0

could solve math word problems. The non-graduate responses were similar to the graduates: 78.3 percent could solve general math problems, 35 percent could solve algebra problems, 10 percent could solve geometry problems and 55 percent could solve math word problems. There were no respondents on either survey who acknowledged they could solve none of the types of math problems listed (Table 8).

Questions G and H dealt with the employment of the 1982 examinees. The graduates indicated 48 percent were employed full-time, 28.6 percent were employed part-time, 13.2 percent were not employed, and 10.2 percent did not reply to the question. The non-graduates indicated 31.6 percent were employed full-time, 36.7 employed part-time, 25 percent were not employed, and 6.7 percent did not respond to the question (Table 9). Many different occupations were listed by the graduates and non-graduates and these were listed under broad general occupation categories (Table 10). Both the graduates and non-graduates had the largest percentage of persons employed in the service occupations. The second largest percentage for the graduates was clerical/secretarial occupations, for the non-graduates it was technical/electronic occupations.

Questions I and J were different on the two questionnaires. On the graduate survey, the respondents were asked to indicate their present educational status (question I) and grade point average, if they have one (question J). The non-graduate survey asked for the current educational status (question I) and reason for leaving the program--if they have (question J).

Table 8
Responses to Survey Question F

F. The GED Mathematics subtest involves computation and understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts. Do you understand how to solve the following types of math problems? Check as many as applicable.

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
General Math	158	80.6	47	78.3
Algebra	72	36.7	21	35.0
Geometry	30	15.3	6	10.0
Math word problems	124	63.3	33	55.0
None of the above	--	--	--	--

Table 9
Responses to Survey Question G

G. Are you employed?

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
YES, employed full-time	94	48.0	19	31.6
YES, employed part-time	56	28.6	22	36.7
NO, unemployed	26	13.2	15	25.0
No response	20	10.2	4	6.7
Total	196	100.0	60	100.0

Table 10
Responses to Survey Question H

H. What is your present occupation?

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent*	Frequency	Percent*
Clerical/ Secretarial	34	22.7	6	14.6
Homemaker	6	4.0	4	9.8
Manager	11	7.3	1	2.4
Professional	1	0.6	--	--
Proprietor	7	4.7	1	2.4
Service	82	54.7	19	46.3
Technical/ Electronic	5	3.3	9	22.0
Other	4	2.7	1	2.4
Subtotal	150	100.0	41	99.9
Non-employed/ No response	46		19	
Total	196		60	

*Percents calculated based upon the number of employed graduates/non-graduates responding.

Relative to the graduates, eight indicated they were enrolled at another school besides SCC, 125 were not enrolled in post-high school studies and 61 persons gave no response (Table 11). Of the students enrolled in college, one had a 4.00 grade point average, one had a 3.99-3.00 average, and four had a 2.99-2.00 average. No one reported an average lower than a 2.99-2.00, a C average (Table 12).

Relative to the non-graduates, 21 were currently enrolled continuing to study for another test; no one indicated they would not complete the tests, but 39 persons did not respond to the question (Table 13). The reasons for leaving were: to take a job (27 persons), personal problems (six persons), take a better job (four persons), and other reasons (eight persons) (Table 14).

The following data were generated by the responses to question K. The average age of the graduate was 26.68 years, with 71 males and 111 females responding. The singles outnumbered the marrieds 108 to 64, and those reporting children had an average of 2.2 children. The last grade completed in high school was the tenth grade. The non-graduates were younger, with the average age being 22.69; there were 19 males and 37 females. Nineteen were married and 31 were single, with those reporting children having an average of 1.8 children. The last grade completed in high school was the tenth, as with the graduates (Tables 15-17).

Table 11
Responses of Graduates to Survey Question I

I. Check the item that best indicates your current educational status.

Current Educational Status	Responses
1. Enrolled in post-high school studies at SCC.	8
2. Enrolled in post-high school studies at another school besides SCC.	2
3. Not presently enrolled in post-high school studies.	125
4. No response	61

Table 12
Responses of Graduates to Survey Question J

J. If now enrolled in college, please indicate your grade point average.

G.P.A.	Responses
No grade points earned as yet.	2
4.00 (A)	1
3.99-3.00 (B)	1
2.99-2.00 (C)	4
1.99-1.00 (D)	0

Table 13
Responses of Non-graduates to Survey Question I

I. Check the item that best indicates your current educational status.

Current Educational Status	Responses
1. Continuing to study for another test, after having completed one or more subtests.	21
2. Do not expect to complete another GED subtest.	0
3. No response	39

Table 14
Responses of Non-graduates to Survey Question J

J. If you left the GED study program without getting your diploma, what was your reason for leaving?

Reasons	Responses
1. GED work too difficult to understand	0
2. Teachers did not offer instruction to meet my needs	0
3. To take a job (unemployed when entered program)	27
4. To take a better job (employed when entered program)	4
5. For lack of interest	0
6. Personal problems	6
7. Other reason	8

Table 15
Responses to Survey Question K

K. Personal Information

Personal Information	GRADUATES	NON-GRADUATES
Age	26.68 (avg)*	22.69 (avg)
Male	71+	19
Female	111+	37
Married	64++	19
Single	108++	31
Number of dependent children	2.2 (avg)'	1.8 (avg)'
Last grade completed in school	10.1 (avg)"	10.3 (avg)"

* (G) 26.68 includes 7 "over 55" answers;
25.48 omitting those 7 answers
\+ (G) 14 no responses to Male or Female
++ (G) 24 no responses to Single or Married
' (G) 31 reporting children,
(N-G) 11 reporting children
" (G) 135 reporting grade completed,
(N-G) 47 reporting grade completed

Table 16
Frequency Distribution for Age of Graduate GED Examinees

AGE	Frequency	Percent
16	5	2.79
17	11	6.14
18	32	17.88
19	9	5.03
20	6	3.35
21	21	11.73
22	22	12.29
23	8	4.47
24	1	0.01
25	7	3.91
26	7	3.91
27	1	0.01
28	1	0.01
29	1	0.01
30	1	0.01
31	2	1.12
32	0	----
33	0	----
34	2	1.12
35	6	3.35
36	4	2.23
37	4	2.23
38	3	1.68
39	3	1.68
40	1	0 01
41	0	----
42	1	0.01
43	1	0 01
44	0	----
45	0	----
46	0	----
47	1	0 01
48	0	----
49	0	----
50	0	----

(Continued)

Table 16

(CONTINUED)

AGE	Frequency	Percent
51	0	----
52	3	1.68
53	1	0.01
54	2	1.12
55	2	1.12
56	0	----
57	0	----
58	0	----
59	0	----
60	1	0.01
61	0	----
62	2	1.12
Subtotal	172	
"over 55"	7	
Subtotal	179	
No response	17	
Total	196	

N=179 $\bar{X}$ = 26.68 (using 56 for "over 55" responses)

N=172 $\bar{X}$ = 25.48

Table 17
Frequency Distribution for Age of Non-graduate GED Examinees

AGE	Frequency	Percent
17	7	13.46
18	4	7.69
19	2	3.85
20	8	15.38
21	12	23.08
22	3	5.77
23	2	3.85
24	0	----
25	5	9.62
26	1	0.02
27	1	0.02
28	0	----
29	0	----
30	0	----
31	0	----
32	2	3.85
33	0	----
34	0	----
35	3	5.77
36	1	0.02
37	0	----
38	0	----
39	0	----
40	0	----
41	0	----
42	0	----
43	0	----
44	1	0.02
Subtotal	52	
No response	8	
Total	60	

N=52 $\overline{X}$ = 22.69

Question L asked the examinees how they found out about the program. The best advertising came from those who were friends and relatives of the examinees. Of the graduates, 25.1 percent said they found out through relatives, 41.5 percent through friends, and 11.6 percent through high school counselors. The other sources in descending order were: SCC counselors--6.8 percent, newspaper ad--4.8 percent, newspaper article--2.4 percent, GED flyers, posters--2.4 percent, radio and TV--one percent each, and other--3.4 percent. The non-graduates responded in similar form, with the first two sources reversed. Leading the list was 37.3 percent finding out about the program from relatives, and friends providing the information to 26.9 percent. In descending order the sources were: high school counselors--13.4 percent, newspaper article--7.5 percent, SCC counselors and GED posters and flyers--6 percent each, other-1.5 percent, and newspaper ads--1.4 percent, with radio and TV not cited as a source (Table 18).

Question M dealt with the main reason examinees took the GED Tests. The graduates indicated the main reason they took the GED Tests was job-related--36.7 percent said they took the GED either to obtain a job or get a promotion. Next, 23.5 percent responded they took the tests to pursue advanced education, but the reason of personal satisfaction was a close third with 22.4 percent indicating this as their main reason. Only 4.1 percent indicated they took the tests to exit high school early; one percent stated they took the tests to enter the military and

Table 18
Responses to Survey Question L

L. How did you find out about the GED program at SCC? Check as many as applicable.

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Relative	52	25.1	25	37.3
Friend	86	41.5	18	26.9
TV	2	1.0	0	----
Radio	2	1.0	0	----
Newspaper article	5	2.4	5	7.5
Newspaper ad	10	4.8	1	1.4
GED flyer, posters	5	2.4	4	6.0
SCC counselors	14	6.8	4	6.0
High school counselors	24	11.6	9	13.4
Other	7	3.4	1	1.5
Total	207	100.0	67	100.0

3.1 percent noted other reasons. No response was given by 9.2 percent. Among the non-graduates the answer most frequently given, by 33.3 percent of the respondents, was personal satisfaction, with these answers in descending order: pursue advanced education--26.7 percent, job-related--13.3 percent, exit high school early--6.7 percent, enter the military--1.7 percent, other--8.3 percent, with no response given by 10 percent (Table 19).

The last question, N, asked the examinees if they would attend a structured, credit adult high school in the public school if the GED was not available at SCC. Of the graduates, 36.7 percent responded yes and 49 percent responded no. Either no response or "unsure" was indicated by 14.3 percent. Of the non-graduates, 40 percent stated they would attend a regular high school and 55 percent stated no, they would not. Five percent did not answer the question (Table 20).

Table 19
Responses to Survey Question M

M. What was your main reason for taking the GED Tests? Check only one answer.

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
To pursue advanced education	46	23.5	16	26.7
To exit early from regular high school	8	4.1	4	6.7
Job related - either to obtain a job or a promotion	72	36.7	8	13.3
Personal satisfaction	44	22.4	20	33.3
To enter the military	2	1.0	1	1.7
Other	6	3.0	5	8.3
No response	18	9.2	6	10.0
Total	196	99.9	60	100.0

Table 20
Responses to Survey Question N

N. Would you have attended a structured, credit adult high school program in the public school system if GED was not available through SCC?

	GRADUATES		NON-GRADUATES	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
YES	72	36.7	24	40.0
NO	96	49.0	33	55.0
No response/Unsure	28	14.3	3	5.0
Total	196	100.0	60	100.0

CHAPTER FIVE
Interpretation, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter deals with the interpretation of the results, the conclusions reached as a result of the study, and recommendations for improving the program.

Interpretation of Results

Graduates and non-graduates of the GED program at SCC were asked to assess the study program by answering survey questions (Appendices A and B, respectively). The data from the two survey instruments were reported in the previous chapter. An interpretation of the data gathered follows. First, the research questions are addressed, followed by additional interpretations.

Research Question 1. What was the examinee's assessment of the quality of instruction, course materials, and five special GED learning laboratories?

The graduates and non-graduates rated the course materials and the instruction in the five areas on the basis of: excellent (4), good (3), average (2), and poor (1). The examinees' responses were tabulated and a mean score obtained. Overall, the non-graduates tended to rate the course materials and instruction lower than the graduates. Mean ratings of the course materials by the graduates were above three in writing skills, reading, and

mathematics and above two in science and social studies. The non-graduates ranked only the writing skills and reading three or above, with social studies, science, and mathematics between two and three. Rating the instruction, the graduates rated reading and mathematics three and above with social studies, science, and writing skills between two and three. The non-graduates ranked all five instruction areas between two and three.

The five special labs (dealt with in question B) are all located on the main campus and were used by a small number of respondents. The graduates who used the labs rated the math and Plato labs above a 3.8 mean average. The speech and reading labs rated 3.0 and above and the English lab rated 2.81. The non-graduates rated all the labs 3.0 and above. Regarding the value of the labs, the non-graduates rated them higher than the graduates overall.

Research Question 2. What center (or centers) was used most often and for what length of time?

The centers most used were the Campus Centers (morning and night) and the centers in the county located in dense population areas (Table 7). Some graduate examinees (11.2 percent) and non-graduate examinees (five percent) used no center or tested on demand.

It was shown that the majority of the examinees had an estimated preparation time of between one and 10 weeks. The national survey reported on by Malizio and Whitney (1981) asked for hours of preparation time. The most frequently given answer

was approximately 20 hours. However, a large number of respondents on that survey did not answer the question with an hourly estimate. In view of the confusion about this question on the national survey, it was asked differently locally.

Research Question 3. What method (or methods) of advertisement was most productive in numbers of students?

The best advertising appeared to be free and by word-of-mouth as relatives and friends were the best sources for finding out about the GED program. The third best recruitment came through high school counselors; this was surprising because advertising has not been directed to this group. In May 1983, McClure conducted a survey of selected outreach study centers to determine what methods of recruitment were most effective. Eight outreach centers participated in the study with 68 students responding. Although different categories appeared on the form than were on the surveys of this study, there were some similarities. Most participants in the McClure survey (1983) heard about the GED program at SCC from a relative or friend. Posters, flyers, and newspaper ads were also shown to be effective, as they were in this study.

Research Question 4. What was the main reason for taking the GED Tests?

The main reason for taking the GED Tests was job related for the graduates, whereas personal satisfaction was the main reason for the non-graduates. The second reason for both groups was to pursue advanced education. The third reason for graduates

was personal satisfaction and the non-graduates reported job related reasons for taking the tests. In the national study of Malizio and Whitney (1981) the most common reason for taking the GED Tests was job related with meeting college standards the second most common reason, personal satisfaction the third, and to enter the military the fourth.

Research Question 5. What was the demographic profile of the typical SCC GED examinee?

The graduate was approximately 26.68 years old, 71 were male, 111 were female, and usually single--108 single and 71 married. Those reporting children had 2.2 offspring on the average. The highest grade completed in high school was tenth. The non-graduate was younger, approximately 22.69 years old, 19 were male, 37 female, 19 married, 31 single and those reporting children had 1.8 offspring, on the average. The highest grade completed was tenth (Table 15). As with the national survey of Malizio and Whitney (1981), more women than men were in the sample responding. The mean age was 25.2 nationally. A profile of Florida, 1972-82, found the largest number in the age group from 20-25 and the largest number completed the tenth grade (State Advisory Council on Adult and Community Education, 1983).

In addition to the preceding information, other observations and subsequent interpretations were derived from the circulated survey.

In regard to the employment picture of the 1982 examinees: over three-fourths of the graduates were employed either full-time or part-time; approximately 68 percent of the non-graduates were employed either full-time or part-time (Table 9). According to the 1980 national survey of Malizio and Whitney, 80 percent of the respondents were employed. That survey divided the occupations into categories and the most frequent job category reported was service, as with the local examinees.

The surveys revealed that the examinees would strongly recommend the GED program at SCC to others. Over 80 percent of both graduates and non-graduates would recommend the GED program at SCC.

A majority of graduates and non-graduates agreed they would not attend a regular structured high school if the GED was not available at SCC. However, fewer graduates (49 percent) than non-graduates (55 percent) said no. Five graduates wrote "unsure" and were therefore counted among the 28 "no responses." This indicated a segment of the population to be undecided on this question.

Selected comments from examinees' questionnaires were compiled and are listed in Appendix G. Thirty-five graduates and five non-graduates wrote comments on the bottom of their survey instruments where they were asked to add any comments or opinions about what the GED Tests had meant to them in their personal life and/or employment picture.

Conclusions

Based on this study, the GED program at SCC holds significance for area non-high school graduates who want to improve their opportunities for educational growth, occupational growth, and self-growth. Furthermore, this study showed GED graduates to be worthy prospects for recruitment into post-high school studies.

The results of this study should increase awareness of the importance of providing educational programs and monies for non-high school graduate adults in the academic and general public communities.

Some surveys in both groups came back with all check marks, or no answers, on the "open questions." A possible problem of the two surveys was the intermingling of closed and open questions in the questionnaires. Nine of the 14 questions on both surveys were closed questions that had multiple choice answers where a check by the answer choice was sufficient. The other five questions were open and did not provide answer categories (Sudman and Bradburn, 1982). This is a concern that should be addressed in further surveys.

Recommendations for the Improvement of Practice, Including Strategies for Implementation and Change

The following recommendations are made relative to this study, in general, and the last research question, in particular.

Research Question 6. What changes in the program would lead to improvements?

The committee of five GED instructors who were charged with determining the significance of the study found the program exceptionally sound, recommending these changes:

1. The college provide funding for the development and/or purchase of study materials in the areas of social studies and science. It was recommended that practice tests with discrete fact questions testing general knowledge and understanding of a subject be developed. Discrete fact questions appear on the GED Tests, but are infrequently dealt with in the available study materials.

2. The GED instructional staff should actively search for and evaluate new and different written materials than those currently in use. The college should make funds available to purchase different materials, and instructors be asked to participate in evaluation of the materials.

3. Information concerning the GED program should be included with college information packets.

4. A workshop should be conducted where instructors share ideas and materials they may use in their center that have not been distributed to all centers. A portion of the session should be devoted to developing strategies for teaching social studies and science.

5. The use of the five special laboratories on campus should be emphasized. Two of the laboratories--Plato and math--

have extended hours and are available to day and evening students. Therefore, outreach center students could be encouraged to come on campus and use these laboratories.

6. A definite link should be established with a day and an evening counselor at SCC who would be designated the GED contact counselor. These counselors would be available to the instructors and would be available for GED referrals. Lack of information about the college offerings and available loans and grants may be a reason students do not continue their education.

7. Funds should be requested for placement of computer terminals in the larger off-campus GED study centers. Funds should also be provided to train teachers to operate these computers. These computer terminals could be linked to the campus Plato Learning Lab through a special telephone line.

8. Funds should be provided to prepare more flyers to go home with students for friends and family. Teachers should be encouraged to distribute these flyers regularly.

Based on this study, the following general recommendations are made as to implementation:

1. The college should continue to support the GED program at SCC and provide funds for continued growth. Funding for an annual assessment of the program would be advisable.

2. Study centers should continue to be located and enlarged at as many different locations as need justifies.

3. There should be continued emphasis through the media as to the potential worth of the GED program on the educational and self-growth of non-high school graduate adults.

4. SCC should implement an active and continuing program for recruitment of both non-high school graduates for the GED program and GED graduates for college/vocational level work.

Strategies for Diffusion

The survey answers have been compiled and will be distributed to interested administrators, instructors, and counselors. The completed Major Applied Research Project will be presented at Seminole Community College to the President, the Dean of Instruction, the chairperson of the Developmental Division, and the college library. Copies are being forwarded to the GED Testing Service and the State Adult Education Department of Florida by request.

Because an evaluation of the GED program at SCC has never been conducted before, there are no previous research studies with which to make comparisons. However, the response to this survey was so encouraging that subsequent studies are urged in order to examine such issues as relationship of test performance to age, sex, method of test preparation, and reading abilities and habits.

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APPENDIX A

GED GRADUATE SURVEY

Seminole Community College

GED Graduate Survey Form

Confidential Information

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

Please answer all the questions and return the completed survey in the enclosed Self-addressed envelope for analysis. Thank you,

A. How do you feel about each of the educational services provided through the GED program at SCC?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Course Materials in:					
A. Writing Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Science	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Reading	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Mathematics	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Instruction in:					
A. Writing Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Science	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Reading	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Mathematics	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

B. There are five special labs, located on the Seminole Community College campus only. If you used one or more of the labs, please rate those you used.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Math Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. English Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Reading Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Speech Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Plato Computer Learning Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

C. Would you recommend the GED program at SCC to others?

____Yes

____No

D. How many weeks did you spend at an SCC study center or through the SCC correspondence course preparing to take the GED Tests?

_____weeks

E. At what center or centers did you prepare to take the GED Tests? If a correspondence student, please indicate.

_____center or centers

F. The GED Mathematics subtest involves computation and understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts. Do you understand how to solve the following types of math problems? Check as many as applicable:

___1. General Math - add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, percents, decimals, and fractions.

___2. Algebra

___3. Geometry

___4. Math word problems

___5. None of the above

G. Are you employed?
___1. Yes, employed full time
___2. Yes, employed part-time
___3. No unemployed

H. What is your present occupation? _____

I. Check the item that best indicates your current educational status.
___1. Enrolled in post-high school studies at SCC.
___2. Enrolled in post-high school studies at another school besides SCC.
___3. Not presently enrolled in post-high school studies.

J. If now enrolled in college, please indicate your grade point average
___1. No grade points earned as yet.
___2. 4.00 (A)
___3. 3.99 - 3.00 (B)
___4. 2.99 - 2.00 (C)
___5. 1.99 - 1.00 (D)

K. Personal Information
___1. Age
___2. Male
___3. Female
___4. Married
___5. Single
___6. Number of Dependent Children
___7. Last grade completed in school

L. How did you find our about the GED program at SCC? Check as many applicable.
___1. Relative
___2. Friend
___3. TV
___4. Radio
___5. Newspaper article
___6. Newspaper ad
___7. GED flyer, posters
___8. SCC counselors
___9. High school counselors
___10. Other, please state_____

M. What was your main reason for taking the GED Tests? Check only one answer.
___1. To pursue advanced education
___2. To exit early from regular high school
___3. Job related - either to obtain a job or a promotion
___4. Personal satisfaction
___5. To enter the military
___6. Other. Please state_____

N. Would you have attended a structured, credit adult high school program in the public school system if GED was not available through SCC?
___1. Yes
___2. No

Please add any comments or opinions you would like concerning what taking the GED Tests has meant to you in your personal life and/or your employment picture.
COMMENTS OR OPINIONS

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

GED SURVEY FORM

Seminole Community College

GED Survey Form

Confidential Information

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

Please answer all the questions and return the completed survey in the enclosed Self-addressed envelope for analysis. Thank you,

A. How do you feel about each of the educational services provided through the GED program at SCC?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Course Materials in:					
A. Writing Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Science	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Reading	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Mathematics	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Instruction in:					
A. Writing Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Science	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Reading	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Mathematics	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

B. There are five special labs, located on the Seminole Community College campus only. If you used one or more of the labs, please rate those you used.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Math Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. English Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Reading Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Speech Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Plato Computer Learning Lab	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

C. Would you recommend the GED program at SCC to others?

____Yes

____No

D. How many weeks did you spend at an SCC study center or through the SCC correspondence course preparing to take the GED Tests?

_____weeks

E. At what center or centers did you prepare to take the GED Tests? If a correspondence student, please indicate.

_____center or centers

F. The GED Mathematics subtest involves computation and understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts. Do you understand how to solve the following types of math problems? Check as many as applicable:

___1. General Math - add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, percents, decimals, and fractions.

___2. Algebra

___3. Geometry

___4. Math word problems

___5. None of the above

G. Are you employed?
___1. Yes, employed full time
___2. Yes, employed part-time
___3. No unemployed

H. What is your present occupation? _____

I. Check the item that best indicates your current educational status.
___1. Continuing to study for another test, after having completed one or more subtests.
___2. Do not expect to complete another GED subtest.

J. If you left the GED study program without getting your diploma, what was your reason for leaving?
___1. GED work too difficult to understand
___2. Teachers did not offer instruction to meet my needs
___3. To take a job (unemployed when entered program)
___4. To take a better job (employed when entered program)
___5. For lack of interest
___6. Personal problems
___7. Other reason, please state_____

K. Personal Information
___1. Age
___2. Male
___3. Female
___4. Married
___5. Single
___6. Number of Dependent Children
___7. Last grade completed in school

L. How did you find our about the GED program at SCC? Check as many applicable.
___1. Relative
___2. Friend
___3. TV
___4. Radio
___5. Newspaper article
___6. Newspaper ad
___7. GED flyer, posters
___8. SCC counselors
___9. High school counselors
___10. Other, please state_____

M. What was your main reason for taking the GED Tests? Check only one answer.
___1. To pursue advanced education
___2. To exit early from regular high school
___3. Job related - either to obtain a job or a promotion
___4. Personal satisfaction
___5. To enter the military
___6. Other. Please state_____

N. Would you have attended a structured, credit adult high school program in the public school system if GED was not available through SCC?
___1. Yes
___2. No

Please add any comments or opinions you would like concerning what taking the GED Tests has meant to you in your personal life and/or your employment picture.
COMMENTS OR OPINIONS

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF EXPLANATION TO GED GRADUATE

Developmental Division
Seminole Community College
Sanford, Florida 32771
June 4, 1983

Dear GED Graduate,

I am conducting a study to evaluate the GED program at Seminole Community College. This study will provide answers to questions asked by educators, employers, and prospective students relative to the value of the GED program. You can help with this study by completing and returning the attached survey form. No names of participants will be used in the study and the completed survey forms will be kept confidential. After the data is gathered, the survey forms will be destroyed.

Participation in this study is voluntary, but without your help the project will be incomplete. Please fill out the survey and return it in the stamped, addressed envelope by June 10, 1983.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Joanne Mize

Joanne Mize
GED Instructor

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF EXPLANATION TO NON-GRADUATE

Developmental Division
Seminole Community College
Sanford, Florida 32771
June 4, 1983

Dear Students and Former Students,

I am conducting a study to evaluate the GED program at Seminole Community College. This study will provide answers to questions asked educators, employers, and prospective students relative to the value of the GED program. You can help with this study by completing and returning the attached survey form. No names of participants will be used in the study, and the completed survey forms will be kept confidential. After the data is gathered, the survey forms will be destroyed.

Participation in the study is voluntary, but without your help the project will be incomplete. Please fill out the survey form and return it in the stamped, addressed envelope by June 10, 1983.

If you are not currently entrolled in the GED program, you are urged to return and complete testing for your GED Florida High School diploma.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Joanne Mize

Joanne Mize
GED Instructor

APPENDIX E

GED GRADUATE SURVEY RESULTS

Seminole Community College

GED Graduate Survey Form

Confidential Information

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

Please answer all the questions and return the completed survey in the enclosed Self-addressed envelope for analysis. Thank you,

A. How do you feel about each of the educational services provided through the GED program at SCC?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Course Materials in:					
A. Writing Skills	31	115	6	1	
B. Social Studies	6	37	82	26	
C. Science	8	47	93	14	
D. Reading	62	96	4	4	
E. Mathematics	91	72	7	2	
2. Instruction in:					
A. Writing Skills	22	62	45	5	
B. Social Studies	16	121	16	3	
C. Science	21	108	21	6	
D. Reading	41	53	28	3	
E. Mathematics	52	71	32	1	

B. There are five special labs, located on the Seminole Community College campus only. If you used one or more of the labs, please rate those you used.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Math Lab	19		2		
2. English Lab	2	5	4		
3. Reading Lab	3	14			
4. Speech Lab		2			
5. Plato Computer Learning Lab	11	2			

C. Would you recommend the GED program at SCC to others?

169 Yes

2 No

D. How many weeks did you spend at an SCC study center or through the SCC correspondence course preparing to take the GED Tests?

* weeks *(Table 6)

E. At what center or centers did you prepare to take the GED Tests? If a correspondence student, please indicate.

** center or centers **(Table 7)

F. The GED Mathematics subtest involves computation and understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts. Do you understand how to solve the following types of math problems? Check as many as applicable:

158 1. General Math - add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, percents, decimals, and fractions.

72 2. Algebra

30 3. Geometry

124 4. Math word problems

0 5. None of the above

G. Are you employed?
94 1. Yes, employed full time
56 2. Yes, employed part-time
26 3. No unemployed

H. What is your present occupation? (Table 10)

I. Check the item that best indicates your current educational status.
8 1. Enrolled in post-high school studies at SCC.
2 2. Enrolled in post-high school studies at another school besides SCC.
125 3. Not presently enrolled in post-high school studies.

J. If now enrolled in college, please indicate your grade point average
2 1. No grade points earned as yet.
1 2. 4.00 (A)
1 3. 3.99 - 3.00 (B)
4 4. 2.99 - 2.00 (C)
0 5. 1.99 - 1.00 (D)

K. Personal Information
26.68 1. Age
71 2. Male
111 3. Female
64 4. Married
108 5. Single
2.26 6. Number of Dependent Children
10.17 7. Last grade completed in school

L. How did you find our about the GED program at SCC? Check as many applicable.
52 1. Relative
86 2. Friend
2 3. TV
2 4. Radio
5 5. Newspaper article
10 6. Newspaper ad
5 7. GED flyer, posters
14 8. SCC counselors
24 9. High school counselors
7 10. Other, please state

M. What was your main reason for taking the GED Tests? Check only one answer.
46 1. To pursue advanced education
8 2. To exit early from regular high school
72 3. Job related - either to obtain a job or a promotion
44 4. Personal satisfaction
2 5. To enter the military
6 6. Other. Please state

N. Would you have attended a structured, credit adult high school program in the public school system if GED was not available through SCC?
72 1. Yes
96 2. No

Please add any comments or opinions you would like concerning what taking the GED Tests has meant to you in your personal life and/or your employment picture.
COMMENTS OR OPINIONS
(Appendix G)

APPENDIX F

GED SURVEY RESULTS

Seminole Community College

GED Survey Form

Confidential Information

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

Please answer all the questions and return the completed survey in the enclosed Self-addressed envelope for analysis. Thank you,

A. How do you feel about each of the educational services provided through the GED program at SCC?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Course Materials in:					
A. Writing Skills	16	25	5	1	
B. Social Studies	4	27	6	11	
C. Science	6	31	5	7	
D. Reading	8	25	4	1	
E. Mathematics	5	33	7	1	
2. Instruction in:					
A. Writing Skills	16	10	15	6	
B. Social Studies	7	22	19	5	
C. Science	11	13	17	4	
D. Reading	15	14	14	3	
E. Mathematics	18	15	12	5	

B. There are five special labs, located on the Seminole Community College campus only. If you used one or more of the labs, please rate those you used.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Did Not Use
1. Math Lab	4	2			
2. English Lab	5	2			
3. Reading Lab	2	7	1		
4. Speech Lab	1		1		
5. Plato Computer Learning Lab	3		1		

C. Would you recommend the GED program at SCC to others?

49 Yes

1 No

D. How many weeks did you spend at an SCC study center or through the SCC correspondence course preparing to take the GED Tests?

* _____ weeks * (Table 6)

E. At what center or centers did you prepare to take the GED Tests? If a correspondence student, please indicate.

** _____ center or centers ** (Table 7)

F. The GED Mathematics subtest involves computation and understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts. Do you understand how to solve the following types of math problems? Check as many as applicable:

47 1. General Math - add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, percents, decimals, and fractions.

21 2. Algebra

6 3. Geometry

33 4. Math word problems

0 5. None of the above

G. Are you employed?

19 1. Yes, employed full time
22 2. Yes, employed part-time
15 3. No unemployed

H. What is your present occupation? (Table 10)_____

I. Check the item that best indicates your current educational status.

21 1. Continuing to study for another test, after having completed one or more subtests.
0 2. Do not expect to complete another GED subtest.

J. If you left the GED study program without getting your diploma, what was your reason for leaving?

0 1. GED work too difficult to understand
0 2. Teachers did not offer instruction to meet my needs
27 3. To take a job (unemployed when entered program)
4 4. To take a better job (employed when entered program)
0 5. For lack of interest
6 6. Personal problems
8 7. Other reason, please state_____

K. Personal Information

22.69 1. Age
19 2. Male
37 3. Female
19 4. Married
31 5. Single
1.8 6. Number of Dependent Children
10.3 7. Last grade completed in school

L. How did you find our about the GED program at SCC? Check as many applicable.

25 1. Relative
18 2. Friend
0 3. TV
0 4. Radio
5 5. Newspaper article
1 6. Newspaper ad
4 7. GED flyer, posters
4 8. SCC counselors
9 9. High school counselors
1 10. Other, please state_____

M. What was your main reason for taking the GED Tests? Check only one answer.

16 1. To pursue advanced education
4 2. To exit early from regular high school
8 3. Job related - either to obtain a job or a promotion
20 4. Personal satisfaction
1 5. To enter the military
5 6. Other. Please state_____

N. Would you have attended a structured, credit adult high school program in the public school system if GED was not available through SCC?

24 1. Yes
33 2. No

Please add any comments or opinions you would like concerning what taking the GED Tests has meant to you in your personal life and/or your employment picture.

COMMENTS OR OPINIONS
(Appendix G)_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX G

SELECTED COMMENTS

Your school is great. I would have started college there as I was accepted. My financial benefits are better here.

It was a nice alternative to attending high school a full four years. Also an early start on college. Thank you.

I'd like to thank you so much for what I learned in GED.

I believe the GED program is very valuable and beneficial to an adult student with a schooling deficiency. It enabled me to brush up on my studies and qualified me through testing to enter the junior college of my choice. I value the GED program highly and do not hesitate to recommend it.

My parents couldn't be happier. I always wanted to go to college. I feel a lot smarter. The teachers were really concerned with helping me. Without them I could never have done it.

Since I have achieved my goal (GED) I'm making around $40,000 a year in pay. All the credit goes to SCC for helping and understanding what had to be done.

As a result of getting my GED, I have gotten a better job that I wouldn't have without my GED. It also gives me a better personal outlook.

Completing the GED course has enhanced my own personal self-esteem and enables me to better understand concepts in my own field of work and electronics.

I feel the GED is a very good opportunity for someone who has left school for various reasons.

I think I have gained self-respect since gaining my GED diploma. And I am looking forward to continuing my studies at SCC.

I feel I have achieved a great personal triumph. So far it has not helped with my employment.

Personal Satisfaction!

I feel good about myself. I had a goal and I made it.

A personal fulfillment I had delayed for many years. Thank you for the opportunity of realizing it.

I really appreciated the GED test. School really wasn't for me.

My self-worth is better--appreciate so much being able to attend and especially my instructor, she was super!

Personal satisfaction. For the last 10 years I felt English was too difficult, but in the last year I made good progress and hope to continue.

By getting my diploma I can show my kids that is is important to get a high school education.

My children wondered why I did not have a high school diploma when I have two years of college. Now I can also put the high school diploma on job applications.

GED was great, but confusion prevailed when I transferred to regular classes at SCC. I was in limbo. I couldn't get accustomed to college classes, so I dropped out for now.

I thank God SCC GED was there when I had to work and the high school wouldn't let me transfer to morning sessions. I know I learned more at SCC in five weeks than I could have learned in a whole year at high school. THANK YOU!

I found myself looking to higher goals now that I have graduated.

It made me feel I did something good, not just a "dropout" anymore.

The GED program has given me a chance to get my diploma that I would not otherwise have. I feel this program is excellent for people who find the pressure of high school too much.

The GED program was a great opportunity for me to complete my graduation and go on to SCC.

Better than the system offered 8 years ago.

I think the GED is a good program. I am going to finish.

GED tests aren't easy, but if you really want it, you do your best and never give up.

The GED has been a tremendous blessing in my life and it has opened up my life to things I didn't know.

The English and writing courses offered for GED were excellent. Learned to speak and write English in one year.

In the beginning I had the silly idea I would get a job without a high school diploma. But now I see different. I know I can't go further without a diploma.

Tried it in New Jersey. Classes too advanced and I felt frustrated. I am going to finish this time.

I think the GED is a good program. I am going to finish soon.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A native of North Carolina, Joanne Page Mize lives in Sanford, Florida. She is a part-time instructor at Seminole Community College teaching GED test preparation and Life/Career Planning. She is also a licensed marriage and family therapist in private practice.

Educational credentials include a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, a Master of Arts in Teaching and a Master of Arts in Guidance and Counseling from Rollins College. Clinical membership in the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists was acquired after the completion of supervised counseling training.

Mize, mother of two grown daughters, is a deacon in the First Presbyterian Church of Sanford and active in professional and community activities.

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